

been withholding a gradually increasing portion of the USPTO's user fees each year. Examples of recent withholdings include \$108 million in Fiscal Year 1999 and \$116 million in Fiscal Year 2000. Last December, consistent with the President's budget request, legislation was passed that provides the USPTO with a budget of \$1,039 million. Of the \$1,039 million, \$784 million will be derived from Fiscal Year 2001 and \$255 million from a carryover from past years and any fees received in excess of \$784 million will not be available to the USPTO in Fiscal Year 2001. With a projected revenue of \$1,152 million for Fiscal Year 2001, this means an overall USPTO withholding of approximately \$368 million for Fiscal Year 2001.

As you know, I have long opposed the diversion of patent fees as a debilitating tax on innovation. In my view, such a tax flies in the face of the Constitution's patent clause and its vision of government as a promoter, rather than an inhibitor, of innovation. I was pleased to work closely with you to sunset the patent surcharge fee in FY 1998, which for several years had been the source of the patent fee revenue subject to diversion and rescission. Last year, I was encouraged that the President's budget for the first time did not include fee diversion or rescission as a means of funding unrelated spending.

Statutory withholding of fees paid for services undermines the integrity of the USPTO's fee-funded agency model and restricts the USPTO's ability to provide service to its customers and to promote American innovation and competitiveness. Withholdings are being made at a time when the USPTO is experiencing unprecedented growth in its workload. In the last five years, patent and trademark filings have been on the rise. Last year, patent filings were up twelve percent and trademark filings were up a staggering forty percent. Reduced availability of fee revenue will prevent the USPTO from replacing and hiring examiners to handle the increased workload. As a result, waiting times for patents and trademarks could drastically increase in 2001 and years to follow and there could be significant delays in bringing important new technologies and products to the marketplace. Companies in high-technology, biotechnology, and many other vital industries depend on prompt and high quality patents and trademarks to protect business investments in R&D and new product promotion. Moreover, fee diversion will force the USPTO to defer certain imperatives in automation, electronic filing, and other implementation of technology to improve the current ability and efficiency of the USPTO to handle increased workload and increasingly complex technologies.

As I understand it, what makes this practice possible is the fact that, in past years, the Budget Committee has delineated a portion of the USPTO's fee revenue as income subject to the discretionary authority of the Committees on Appropriations—an artifact of the patent fee surcharge created by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA '90), which expired on September 30, 1998. OBRA '90 segregated a portion of fees that were subject to the appropriation discretion, and the remainder of the USPTO fee income was appropriated to the agency on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

With the lapse of the patent fee surcharge, the Judiciary Committee fashioned a modified fee system in which there was no longer a "surcharge" component to patent fees. We set the level of the fees to recover the cost of processing applications and intended that all of the fee revenue would be appropriated to the USPTO on a dollar-for-dollar basis, as was done for the majority of fee income under OBRA '90. We did not intend that there

should be any discretion to withhold any portion of the fee revenues.

Accordingly, I recommend that in the upcoming budget all fee revenue of the USPTO be classified in a manner that requires that it be appropriated to the USPTO on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Thus, none of the fee revenues should be considered as discretionary expenditures for the purposes of the appropriations process. I have appreciated working with you on this particular issue in the past. If legislation is necessary to ensure this result, I am pleased to work with you in that regard.

Thank you again for contacting me on this matter and for your consideration of these views. I look forward to working closely with you on this matter and other issues.

Sincerely,

ORRIN G. HATCH,
Chairman.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE PAY PARITY

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I would like to commend the chairman of the Budget Committee for addressing the issue of Federal employee pay with the senior Senator from Virginia and me today.

The House-passed fiscal year 2002 budget resolution contains important provisions to ensure parity between the pay raises granted to civilian Federal employees and those provided to members of the armed services. Disparate treatment of civilian and military pay goes against longstanding policy of parity for all those who have chosen to serve our Nation—whether that service is with the civilian workforce or in the armed services. In fact, a comparison of military and civilian pay increases by the Congressional Research Service finds that in 17 of these last 20 years military and civilian pay increases have been identical.

Mr. WARNER. In the 106th Congress, an overwhelming majority of the United States Senate agreed, and approved a bipartisan pay parity amendment by a vote of 94 to 6 during consideration of legislation I introduced providing important pay increases for the military—S. 4, the Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines Bill of Rights. I know that Chairman DOMENICI supported that Federal employee pay parity amendment, and has been an advocate for pay parity through his position on the Budget Committee.

Mr. DOMENICI. As the chairman of the Armed Services Committee and the Senator from Maryland know, the Budget Committee has included language assuming parity between the raises granted to Federal employees and members of the armed services in the Committee Report on the Budget Resolution for the past 2 years.

Mr. WARNER. I thank the chairman of the Budget Committee for his strong past support. Would the Chairman explain what provisions regarding Federal employee pay have been included in this budget resolution?

Mr. DOMENICI. In drafting the budget resolution for fiscal year 2002, we have assumed that the historic pay parity between civilian and military employees will be maintained, and that the President's proposed 4.6 percent

raise for military personnel will be similarly provided to all Federal workers next year.

Mr. SARBANES. I thank the chairman, and the distinguished Senator from Virginia for their interest and support. I am sure we all agree that a talented Federal and military workforce is crucial to getting the work of the American people done skillfully and efficiently. In many instances, Federal civilian and military employees work side-by-side doing the important work of the Nation, and Congress has recognized that we should not undermine the morale of these dedicated public servants by failing to bring them in line with military personnel. Continuing pay parity is one way to ensure the Federal Government is able to attract and retain qualified public servants.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Senator from Iowa be recognized to speak as in morning business, and the time not be charged against either party on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments are laid aside. The Senator from Iowa is recognized as in morning business.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Did the Senator from Nevada have a closing statement to make?

Mr. REID. I also checked with staff who, as you know, know more about what is going on out here than most of us. I am sorry to admit that. They indicated that would be read upon the completion of your statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

TAXES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to address the issue of tax cuts. It is an issue on which Republicans and Democrats all agree. We may not agree on how much taxes should be cut, but we do agree that the Federal Government is collecting too much tax. The current and projected U.S. tax receipts are far in excess of the amounts needed to operate the Federal Government. The most troubling news is that the bulk of these excess collections come from individual taxpayers. By coming from individual taxpayers, I mean through the individual income tax.

The Congressional Budget Office projects that the Federal Government will accumulate over \$3.1 trillion in excess tax collections over the next 10 years. These excess collections are projected at the time when overall Federal tax receipts are at one of the highest levels in the history of the country. You will see from the charts that, even worse, individual income tax collections are near an all-time high, even higher than some levels imposed during World War II.

I have a series of charts to illustrate our present situation. The first chart I